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Philippine Agriculture-- Its Position and Problems

Foreign Agriculture

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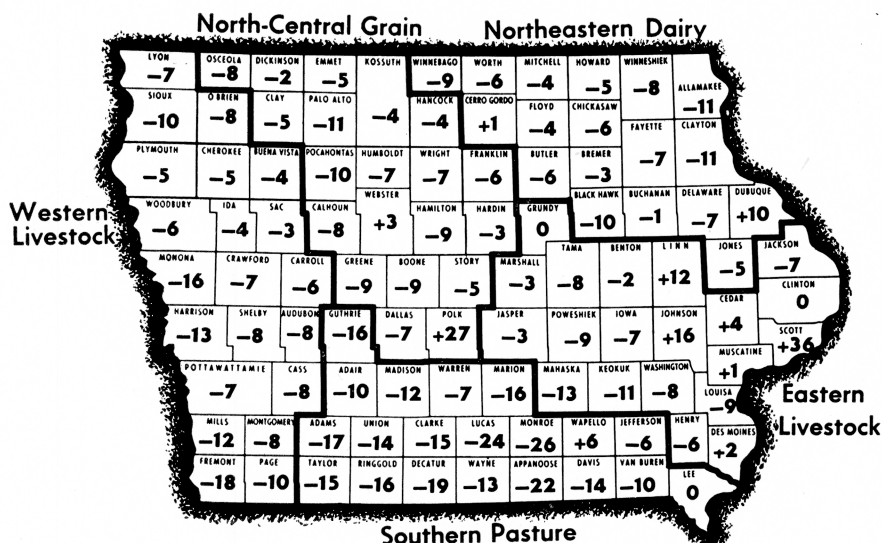
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The losses in the predominantly rural population suggest that the rural farm population is a slowly decreasing minority of the total population of Iowa. At the same time, the population in the town centers represents an increasing majority.

The present number of rural people (and here centers of up to 2 500 are included for comparison) is the smallest reported by the Census Bureau in 70 years. In 1880 the rural population was 85 percent of the total—in 1950, only 53 percent.

This movement taking place within the United States annually—from farm to farm, country to city and city to country, and state to state—is an evidence of adjustment to economic progress. Migration is a means of adjusting population and economic and social resources. Continued improvement in farming methods makes it possible to maintain or increase output with less labor. Thus migration of some people makes improved incomes possible for those who remain.

Most rural areas with their high birth rates will continue to show out-movement as long as agricul-



Percentage changes in open-country population and that of centers up to 1,000 population, 1940-1950.

tural techniques continue to improve; as long as economic and employment conditions remain good in commercial and manufacturing industries; and as long as urban decentralization doesn't drop materially.

Migration is one form of keeping the man-land relationship in proper balance. An important question in any migration—whether

from rural or urban areas—is, who is it that stays? Migration often calls for difficult social adjustments in matters of schools, road maintenance, community development, churches, etc. But it's those who stay who determine the effectiveness of community life and who, according to their abilities, make their contributions to the general economy.

Philippine Agriculture--Its Position and Problems

Condensed from *Foreign Agriculture*

THE PHILIPPINES are essentially a nation of farmers. More than 70 percent of its people are directly engaged in agriculture.

Political independence for the Philippine Islands—granted in 1946—brought mixed blessings. With political independence came many problems of economic independence. High among those were those of agriculture.

Some of the agricultural problems grew out of World War II. These included a drop in production and reduced exports. Other problems were inherent in the republic's rural structure. These included tenancy problems, lack of credit and outmoded practices.

The new republic didn't deal successfully with its economic problems. And, as a result, they continued to grow worse. The situa-

tion became so bad that President Truman dispatched an economic mission in July 1950 to the islands at the request of Philippine President Quirino.

The value of Philippine agricultural output makes up over half of the national income. But this output is largely the result of a peasant type of agriculture—of simple tools and small farms operated under traditional handicaps.

Philippine farmers are poorly equipped to meet the responsibility placed upon them. Fundamental changes are needed if the republic is to become economically stable. But the situation isn't hopeless, for the Philippines have an abundance of potentially rich but undeveloped farm land.

Agricultural expansion is needed for two reasons: There's not enough food for the whole population; nor is there enough for export to pro-

vide purchasing power for essential imports.

The problem is greater than a mere lack of "know-how." None of the problems is so severe as the high rate of tenancy. Through the years, much of the best land in the islands has found its way into the hands of a few who have parceled it out to tenants in small plots at exorbitant rents. Perpetual debt and shortage of farm credit at reasonable terms likewise is a serious problem in the Philippines.

The marketing system in the rural communities is depressing. Too many middlemen, inadequate storage, lack of recognized grades and insufficient knowledge of marketing conditions are prevalent. As a result, the farmer pays a high price for what he buys; and he gets a low price for what he sells.

—Foreign Agriculture, USDA